

**EDCTP Update** is a monthly newsletter from the  
European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership.



## EDCTP Update

May 2020

Supported by the  
European Union



E D C T P

### Highlights

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### Fondation Botnar and Novartis to support EDCTP Fellowships

Fondation Botnar and Novartis will support research capacity development in sub-Saharan Africa within the framework of EDCTP's 2020 Career Development Fellowships. Collectively, the two organisations will contribute up to a maximum of €2.25 million to the initial EDCTP call budget of €1.5 million.

Their investments will support successful proposals to conduct research on child and adolescent health with a focus on the interaction between poverty-related infectious diseases and non-communicable diseases. Proposals for the fellowships can be submitted until 5 August 2020.

Dr Michael Makanga, EDCTP Executive Director: "These collaborations exemplify the value of strategic partnerships aimed to bridge critical research and capacity gaps."

[Read more](#)

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### World HIV Vaccine Day 2020

World HIV Vaccine Day is a global call to support the efforts to develop vaccines to prevent HIV infection. Fortunately, immense progress has been made in the field of prophylactic use of HIV drugs, even though key vulnerable populations remain hard to reach. Tragically, the HIV-epidemic is far from being under control.

"To end the HIV epidemic, development of safe, effective and affordable vaccines remains critical, in addition to the tools already developed. Currently, EDCTP supports two HIV vaccine

studies as part of our comprehensive HIV portfolio." - Dr Michael Makanga, EDCTP Executive Director.

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## WHO AVAREF survey highlights EDCTP's role in supporting ethical and regulatory oversight in Africa

The African Vaccine Regulatory Forum (AVAREF) - a platform that brings together African national regulatory authorities (NRAs) and national ethics committees (ECs) - conducted a digital survey of the state of regulatory activities and ethical review in Africa. On 21 May 2020, the results were presented at a webinar attended by approximately 125 partners of AVAREF including EDCTP. The survey focused on AVAREF's joint review process.

All members states of the WHO African region were invited to participate in the online survey. Twenty-nine (29) countries responded of which 27 indicated to have received support from EDCTP to strengthen their national ethics and regulatory capacities. The survey results indicate that EDCTP's support has greatly enhanced the capacity for ethics review in African countries, including the use of online platforms.

### The joint review process

The WHO Regional Office for Africa has a mandate to facilitate joint review of clinical trials in African countries. At the request of sponsors, the AVAREF secretariat facilitates the joint reviews. National regulatory authorities and national ethics committees have agreed to use the AVAREF platform. The value that joint reviews bring includes better protection of human subjects, scientific and ethical robustness, more expeditious ethics review, sharing of knowledge and experience among regulators and ethics committees.

The current AVAREF joint review and approval process takes 60 working days. Potential efficiency gains achieved by a joint review of a clinical trial application could be diminished due to lengthy post-authorisation steps required for trial commencement. AVAREF encourages countries to coordinate and streamline these steps to allow for timely commencement of trials. Cooperation among participating NRAs and ECs is expected to extend beyond the approval of the clinical trial. Ultimately, the objective is for all 55 African Member States to adopt the standardised tools for the evaluation of clinical trial applications, including those regarding emergency preparedness.

Dr Thomas Nyirenda, EDCTP Strategic Partnerships and Capacity Development Manager, and a member of the AVAREF Technical Coordination Committee and Steering Committee contributed to the development of the process described.

### The survey results

Aiming to better understand the current situation, the AVAREF secretariat conducted the online survey in April 2020. At the webinar in May 2020, the findings on the joint review process were presented by Dr EunMi Kim, WHO consultant on vaccine safety.

Seven countries (Niger, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Togo, Guinea Bissau, Zanzibar, Cote d'Ivoire) indicated that they did not have institutional review boards (IRBs) at universities or research institutes.

Of the represented organisation (NRAs, IRBs, NECs) 10-30% is currently using both paper and electronic submission procedures. Ten per cent (10%) of the organisations developed their own online submission platform. Other digital platforms being used include the online e-Clinical Trial application system and the iRIMS (Integrated Regulatory Information Management system). Average fees charged per application varied from 2836 USD (NRAs), to 1287 USD (NECs) and 265 USD (IRB).

The digital survey found that 51.2% of regulatory authorities reviewed clinical trial protocols by paper review, 21.9% by electronic review and 26.8% by other methods. AVAREF recognises that most African regulatory authorities face serious resource constraints resulting in the lack of capacity for adequate review and approval of clinical trials. Aiming to strengthen clinical trial regulation in Africa, AVAREF views as next steps, among others, to establish internal standard processes, data management and enhancing data security for electronic review submissions.

### AVAREF

The African Vaccine Regulatory Forum (AVAREF) brings together National Regulatory

Authorities and national Ethics Committees with the objective of strengthening clinical trial regulation in Africa.

Established by the World Health Organization in 2006, AVAREF has since then evolved into a strong network of partners and medical professionals whose focus is to build capacity and improve the harmonisation of practices in support of product development.

- More about AVAREF [on the WHO Regional Office for Africa website](#).
- For AVAREF Guidelines, templates and harmonised tools for joint reviews of clinical trial applications, [go directly here](#).

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## 2020 Calls for proposals open - Deadlines in July and August

Currently, the following EDCTP 2020 Calls for proposals are open with various deadlines for application in July and August 2020

### [Ethics and regulatory capacities](#) (CSA2020ERC)

Call budget: €2.5 million / Expected number of grants: 6-8  
Open date: 10 April 2020 / Deadline: 16 July 2020

This call for proposals aims to support sub-Saharan African countries to establish and/or develop robust national medicines regulatory systems and capacities for ethical review of clinical research and use of medicinal products and technologies in humans.

### [EDCTP Regional Networks](#) (CSA2020NoE)

Call budget: €18 million / Expected number of grants: 4  
Open date: 10 April 2020 / Deadline: 23 July 2020

EDCTP has funded four regional networks, defined geographically as Southern, Eastern, Western, and Central Africa. The purpose of this Call for Proposals is to provide continued funding to EDCTP Regional Networks that have demonstrated significant progress towards achieving the pre-defined deliverables set out in the 2015 call.

### [Capacity development for disease outbreak and epidemic response in sub-Saharan Africa, in collaboration with Africa CDC](#) (CSA2020E)

Call budget: €5 million / Expected number of grants: 7-10 grants  
Opening date: 10 April 2020 / Deadline: 30 July 2020

This call for proposals aims to establish an African cohort of epidemiologists. Support will be given to institutions in sub-Saharan Africa and Europe that provide master's training in epidemiology and biostatistics, as part of the Africa CDC's framework for public health work force development.

### [Career Development Fellowships in poverty-related diseases and child and adolescent health](#) (TMA2020CDF)

Call budget: €3.75 million / Expected number of grants: 16-25  
Open date: 10 April 2020 / Deadline: 05 August 2020

The purpose of this call for proposals is to support early- to mid-career researchers ("fellows") by providing them with opportunities to train and develop their clinical research skills. Fondation Botnar and Novartis will contribute to the call budget for successful proposals regarding child and adolescent health.

### [Innovative approaches to enhance poverty-related diseases research](#) (RIA2020I)

Call budget: €23.4 million / Expected number of grants: 5-15  
Open date: 10 April 2020 / Deadline: 13 August 2020

This call for proposals aims to fund a number of small- to medium-scale clinical trials and/or clinical research studies that can deliver proof-of-concept or validation of smart, highly innovative technologies or concepts to prevent, treat or diagnose PRDs in sub-Saharan Africa. The call is strictly aimed at supporting novel innovations.

## [Strategic actions to maximise the impact of research on reducing disease burden, in collaboration with development cooperation initiatives](#) (RIA2020S)

Call budget: €23.4 million / Expected number of grants: 5-15  
Open date: 10 April 2020 / Deadline: 13 August 2020

The purpose of this call for proposals is to support distinct strategic actions which are part of a large-scale programme of development cooperation actions. Projects should focus on research to maximise the uptake of products and health interventions in sub-Saharan Africa.

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## Recently signed grants

### [Capacity development to facilitate delivery and uptake of new or improved medical interventions in African health systems - 2018](#)

- **OPT-SMC** | Coordinator: Prof. Jean Louis Ndiaye | Optimising the impact of Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention: improving delivery and building capacity for evaluation
- **Revive IRTp** | Coordinator: Dr Birungi | Revitalisation of intermittent preventive treatment of malaria in pregnancy in Kenya

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## Projects

### **AfriKADIA | Recruitment for trial on visceral leishmaniasis completed | May 2020**

A clinical trial seeking a safer, efficacious and more patient-friendly treatment for visceral leishmaniasis has completed enrolling a total of 439 patients from four countries - Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda. The study is part of the work of the EDCTP-funded AfriKADIA consortium led by Dr Jorge Alvar of the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative.

If efficacious, the new oral treatment will be easier to administer than the current injectable treatment. Children, who are particularly vulnerable to visceral leishmaniasis, would benefit most from the new treatment.

[More information](#)

### **BCA-WA-ETHICS | Policy brief on gender, ethical review and COVID-19 | May 2020**

The [BCA-WA-ETHICS project](#) (Building capacities in gender mainstreaming for ethics committee members from Senegal to West Africa) is led by Assistant Professor Guillermo Martínez Pérez of the University of Zaragoza (Spain) with partners from Senegal.

The project held its (virtual) first '[BCA-WA-ETHICS International Congress on Gender Mainstreaming: Health Research in West Africa](#)' in Dakar, Senegal, on 23-26 March 2020.

In May 2020, the [consortium published its first Policy](#) brief 'A Framework for the Ethical Evaluation of Research Protocols from a Sex and Gender Perspective during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Other Epidemics', equally published in French and Portuguese.

According to the project's news item the "document is expected to help ethics committees ensure that the specific needs of women, men, and gender minorities are not neglected during the COVID-19 pandemic or other epidemic situations in the future.

The development of the Policy Brief was led by Dr. Nicole Nkoun from the Institute for Health Research, Epidemiological Surveillance, and training (IRESSEF) in Senegal. Scientists from Senegal, Mali, Ivory Coast, and Spain with expertise in gender and research ethics also participated in authoring of the Policy Brief.

A Portuguese version of the Policy Brief was produced in collaboration with Dr. Mouhammed Djicó from the National Research Ethics Committee of Guinea-Bissau, as a part of BCA-WA-ETHICS' outreach and advocacy activities targeting Lusophone African countries".



NOTA SÍNTESE #1  
- MAIO 2020 -

## Quadro para a avaliação ética dos protocolos de pesquisa sob a perspectiva de sexo e género durante a pandemia do COVID-19 e outras epidemias

Uma nota síntese do projeto  
"Capacitação na matéria de integração da perspectiva de género para membros de comités de ética do Senegal à África Ocidental" (BCA-WA-ETHICS)

### **OPT-SMC | MMV highlights start of the project | 14/05 2020**

The OPT-SMC (Optimising the impact of Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention: improving delivery and building capacity for evaluation) is an EDCTP-funded (EUR 2.25 million) project led by Prof. Jean Louis Ndiaye (Université de Thiès, Senegal).

Partners in the project are the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom, and - based in Switzerland - Medicines for Malaria Venture and TDR (UNDP/UNICEF/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases). [MMV highlighted the project](#), providing also a link to the TDR factsheet on the project.

### **EDCTP Regional Networks of Excellence**

EDCTP funds [four regional networks of excellence](#):

EACCR2 - Eastern Africa Consortium for Clinical Research

CANTAM - [Central Africa Network on Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and Malaria](#)  
TESA II - [Trials of Excellence for Southern Africa](#)  
WANETAM - the [West Africa Network of Excellence for clinical trials in TB, AIDS and Malaria](#)

The main objective of the networks is to support clinical research capacity development and promote collaboration and networking between European and African institutions as well as among African institutions.

Some recent developments include:

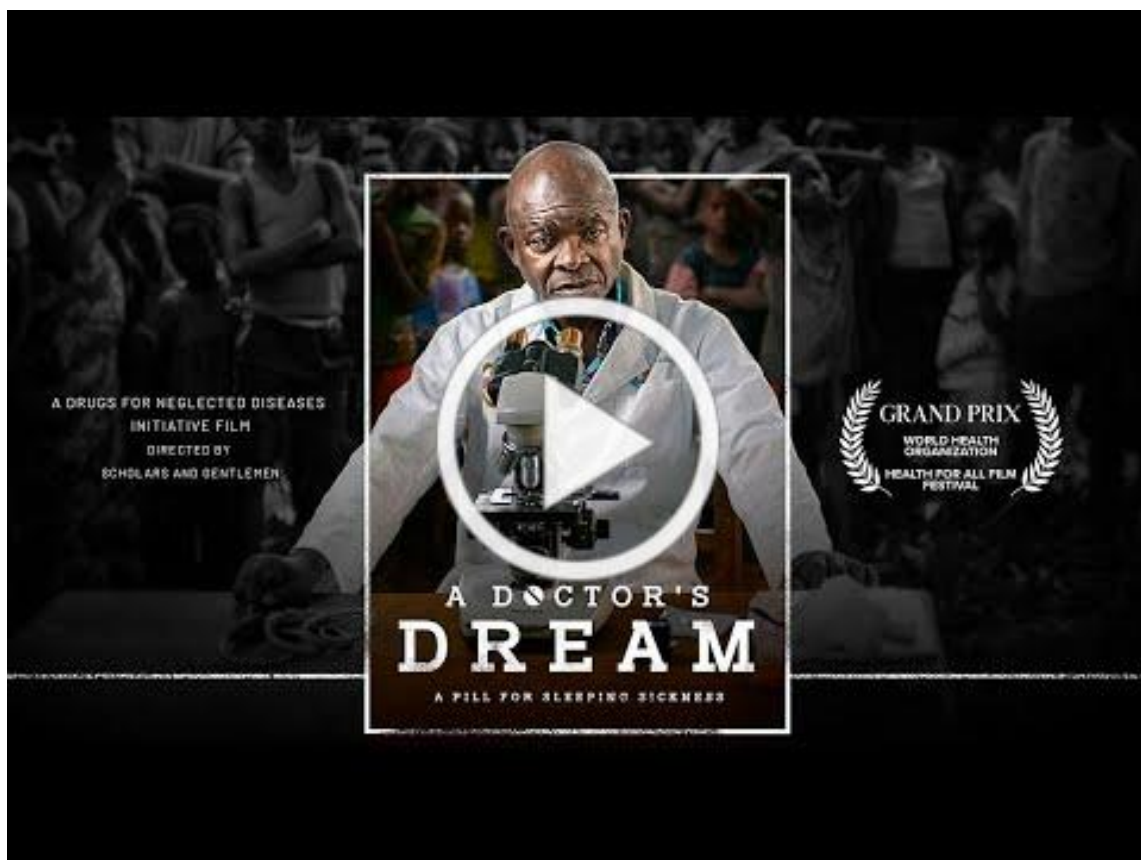
- All networks now have 'member hubs' launched on The Global Health Network: [EACCR](#), [TESA](#), [CANTAM](#), [WANETAM](#)
- Prof. Pontiano Kaleebu (Project Coordinator of the EACCR network) [has been elected Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences](#) (United Kingdom).
- CANTAM was involved in two media productions highlighting the involvement of the Fondation Congolaise pour la Recherche Médicale (the coordinating institution of the CANTAM network) in the COVID-19 response in Congo:  
[DECRYPTAGE DE VOX](#) : Point de la recherche sur le Covid-19 au Congo  
[AFRICA NEWS](#) : Congo : un laboratoire 3D produit des équipements médicaux.

## PROFORMA | news and publications | 2020

- The consortium launched the [PROFORMA Undergraduate Pharmacovigilance curriculum](#) in Feb 2020 for implementation/adoption by medical universities.
- Professor Emile Bienvenu (PROFORMA principal investigator for Rwanda) was [appointed acting vice-chancellor at the University of Rwanda](#).
- **Publication:** *Drug Safety* volume 43, pages339-350(2020)'[Comparative Assessment of the National Pharmacovigilance Systems in East Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania](#).'  
Assessment of the current pharmacovigilance policies, regulations, and infrastructures in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Kenya with identification of gaps, needs and local priorities using WHO Pharmacovigilance Indicators tools.
- **Publication:** *J. of Clinical Medicine* 2020, 9(5), 1550:  
[Prevalence and Correlates of Lymphatic Filariasis Infection and Its Morbidity Following Mass Ivermectin and Albendazole Administration in Mkinga District, North-Eastern Tanzania](#)

## Sleeping sickness

Warm congratulations to the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi)! It received [the Grand Prix at the first WHO Health For All film festival. A short film tells the story of doctors in the Democratic Republic of Congo and their role in developing a revolutionary all-oral treatment for sleeping sickness](#). The movie "A doctor's dream: A pill for sleeping sickness", portrays Dr Victor Kande, a Congolese researcher who helped to lead efforts by the non-profit research and development organisation DNDi and partners to develop the treatment known as fexinidazole.



A doctor's dream: A pill for sleeping sickness

Three EDCTP-funded projects are contributing to maintain progress towards elimination of sleeping sickness or human African trypanosomiasis (HAT), a key neglected infectious disease.

The [FEX-g-HAT](#) project aims to accelerate the introduction of fexinidazole by engaging with health systems and health workers in affected countries to raise awareness of the drug and WHO recommendations on its use, to train health workers on its administration, and to support the development of national health policies.

The [HAT-R-ACC](#) study is assessing whether fexinidazole is also effective against *Trypanosoma brucei rhodesiense*, which causes a more acute form of HAT and is found mainly in East Africa. Fexinidazole is being assessed as an alternative to a toxic arsenic-based drug (melarsoprol) and a less toxic but difficult-to-administer drug (suramin).

A further study, [DiTECT-HAT](#), is focusing on diagnostics. Eradication of HAT will ultimately depend on use of a range of tools to detect *T. brucei* infections in different situations. The DiTECT-HAT study is evaluating three tools, to identify cases in clinics so treatment can be started immediately, to support mass population screening, and to evaluate responses to drugs in clinical trials.

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## EDCTP Fellows in times of COVID-19

Like many of their colleagues, EDCTP fellows have become engaged in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, using their expertise to study, test, organise, help, inform or advise. EDCTP would like to show support to all who are in the midst of fighting this pandemic by highlighting a few of them.

### Joseph Fokam

Dr Joseph Fokam is an EDCTP Career Development Fellow, conducting a project on the 'Evaluation of treatment response, drug resistance and HIV-1 variability among adolescents on first- and second-line antiretroviral therapy in Cameroon'.

He is also the head of the Virology Laboratory at the Chantal BIYA International Reference Centre for research on HIV/AIDS prevention and management. Involved in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Cameroon, he currently coordinates molecular testing of SARS-CoV2 in his laboratory. Within 24 hours, cases suspected of



COVID-19 are referred to clinicians and field epidemiologists of the Ministry of Public Health of Cameroon for intervention.

In this context, Dr Joseph Fokam also coordinated the submission of a proposal for emergency research on COVID-19 to EDCTP.



### **Dr Christine Sekaggya**

Dr Christine Sekaggya, based at the Infectious Diseases Institute in Kampala, Uganda conducts the study 'Safety and efficacy of high-dose rifampicin in TB-HIV co-infected patients on efavirenz-based antiretroviral therapy' (SAEFRIF). See the [short interview at the Ninth EDCTP Forum](#) (2018).

In various ways, she is part of the response to the COVID-19 emergency. She is a member of the Scientific Committee for case management which gives advice to the Ministry of Health on treatment guidelines and occupational health guidance for health workers. Together with her colleagues, she wrote the treatment guidelines for case management of COVID-19 and occupational health. These have been adopted and are being used for training.

Moreover, she is involved in informing the general public by participating in radio and TV talk shows on COVID-19 related issues. Just recently, a COVID 'myth buster' TV show aired.



Christine Sekaggya (right) with Pauline Byakika (an EDCTP Senior Fellow) at the myth buster programme.

Through other projects, she and others are ensuring TB patients' drugs are delivered to their houses even with the general ban on public transport in Kampala due to COVID-19 restrictions.



### **Dr Michael Owusu**

Dr Owusu works at the Department of Medical Diagnostics of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and also as a virologist at the Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research into Tropical Medicine (KCCR). As an EDCTP Career Development Fellow, he works on a study of nasopharyngeal and lung microbiota of HIV-infected children.

Since 12 March 2020, when Ghana recorded its first COVID-19 case, he has been working closely with the KCCR and KNUST teams to test samples from the northern part of Ghana. KCCR was established as a joint venture between the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Ghana, KNUST and the Bernhard Nocht Institute of Tropical Medicine in Germany to be a Centre of Excellence for Research, Training and Multidisciplinary Collaboration with Local and International partners.

KCCR receives samples from 11 out of 16 regions of Ghana. Samples arrive by road or by drone. Apart from leading the testing and organisation of samples, he is also involved in public education on COVID-19 and advocates for preventive measures.



Dr Michael Owusu (Second from left) and a team of scientists involved in Covid-19 testing

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The EDCTP Fellowships scheme is intended to support outstanding African scientist at various levels in their careers and to foster African research leadership. See for an overview of EDCTP current and former fellows the [EDCTP Alumni Network platform](#) [Back to top](#)

## **EDCTP Resources and news**

### **EDCTP SUCCESSOR PROGRAMME**

**PDP and Global Health Organisations' Position Paper:** The global health organisation DSW published a position paper on the EDCTP successor programme: [EDCTP3 Position paper - Call for a dedicated R&I instrument for diseases of poverty under FP9: building on the success of EDCTP](#) The paper is supported by 15 global health and product development partnerships.

## AFRICAN RESEARCH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

### Report [Assessing National Health Research Systems in the WHO African Region 2018](#)

This report is a collective effort by the WHO African Region, the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Global Health Research Unit Tackling Infection to Benefit Africa (TIBA) and EDCTP. It was published by WHO Regional Office for African in 2019 with contributions from EDCTP by Dr Bockarie Moses, Dr Thomas Nyirenda and Dr Michael Makanga (EDCTP).

Through collaboration with WHO African region, EDCTP is involved in this effort to strengthen the health research systems in Africa. See also its report on [Engaging African governments to strengthen national health research systems with complementary international collaboration \(2018\)](#)

### African laboratory capacity development: ASLM Academy

The ASLM Academy is a platform where medical laboratory professionals can access online face-to face training and information packages which can be used in continuous professional development. The platform focuses on delivering practical, problem-solving learning packages that support the advancement of knowledge and skills in laboratory medicine. It does not replace formal pre-service education, rather it assists in recognising the value of various in-service trainings for individual career development. The ASLM Academy will offer certificates to its members for the sessions attended. [Check out the ASLM Academy webpage.](#)

## RESOURCES

### EU Public-Public Partnerships

[ERA-LEARN](#) published its [Annual Report on Public-Public Partnerships 2019](#) which mentions EDCTP in this context: "In 2019, 57 joint calls closed, across all networks. ... ERA-NET Cofund and Article 185 networks continue to be most prominent in terms of the number of calls being implemented. Note, however, that one specific network, EDCTP, accounts for half of the Article 185 calls closing in 2019."

### Added value of EDCTP to Europe and Africa

EDCTP published two short updated brochures on the role of EDCTP in Europe and Africa

[The added value of EDCTP to Africa](#) brochure shows how EDCTP contributes to the process of achievement of the African Union; the creation and retention of a new generation of African scientists; the strengthening and harmonisation of enablers of high-quality and ethical clinical research; and the provision of safe medical interventions.

[The added value of EDCTP to Europe](#) brochure shows how EDCTP contributes to delivering on EU commitments to tackle global challenges; enabling greater scale and scope in the European Research Area; boosting scientific excellence and Europe's global competitiveness in research and innovation; and developing the evidence base for national and international policy-making.

### EDCTP online project portfolio

The vast majority of the [EDCTP2 project portfolio can now be explored online](#). The portfolio offers short summaries of EDCTP-funded projects with a focus on the challenge addressed and the impact aimed for.

The portfolio contains the Collaborative R&D projects 2014-2019 (RIA grants; [also published separately as PDF](#)) and the Fellowship studies 2014-2019 (TMA grants; [also published separately as PDF](#)).

The ethics and regulatory projects 2014-2019 will be added in a few months. The portfolio will be updated with future new grants.

### Public Portal of EDCTP2 grants

The [EDCTP public project portal](#) offers a more technical overview of key data on all EDCTP grants. The portal was upgraded with new search fields and export options, such as the possibility to search by country, by organisation and filter by role, i.e. coordinator or participant.

## EDCTP NEWS

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Tenth EDCTP Forum** has been rescheduled to take place in Maputo, Mozambique, in the same venue from 17-20 October 2021.
- The period to submit nominations for the **EDCTP 2020 Prizes** has been extended until October 2020. The prizes will be awarded at the Tenth Forum in October 2021.

Four EDCTP 2020 Prizes:

- Scientific Leadership Prize - €10,000
- Outstanding Female Scientist Prize - €20,000
- Outstanding Research Team Prize - €50,000
- Dr Pascoal Mocumbi Prize - €50,000

[More information about the EDCTP Prizes](#)

- End of May 2020, two virtual **Scientific Review Committee meetings** were successfully organised to evaluate the proposals for two 2019 calls: 1) Strategic actions on product-related implementation research 2019; 2) Paediatric drug formulations for poverty-related diseases.
- In accordance with **government social distancing measures** regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, EDCTP staff based in The Hague (the Netherlands) and Cape Town (South Africa) are working from home until further notice.
- EDCTP is in the process of changing and updating its website.

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## Funding opportunities

EDCTP funding opportunities above or [here](#)

### Other opportunities

The Global Effort on COVID-19 (GECO) Health Research is a new cross UK government funding call aiming to support applied health research that will address COVID-19 knowledge.

### IsDB-TWAS | Joint Research & Technology Transfer Grant 2020: Quick-Response Research on COVID-19 | Deadline: 15/06 2020

TWAS ([The World Academy of Sciences](#)) and the [Islamic Development Bank](#) (IsDB) are offering a competitive grant for research collaboration. Technologists and researchers from IsDB Member Countries are invited to submit research and innovation proposals that can help address challenges directly and indirectly related to COVID-19.

The IsDB-TWAS Joint Research & Technology Transfer Grant programme is fully funded by the IsDB and established to develop collaboration between researchers of IsDB member countries. Under this programme, qualified researchers from 57 IsDB countries are invited to form a joint research collaboration consisting of two groups from different countries working on areas related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The programme will choose one joint- project per year. The grant amounts to a maximum of USD 50,000 per research group - USD 100,000 total for the joint-project.

[More information:](#)

### South Africa NRF | COVID-19 Africa Rapid Grant Fund | Deadline: 17/06 2020

South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF) in partnership with the [Science Granting Councils Initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa](#) (SGCI), South Africa's [Department of Science and Innovation](#) (DSI), Canada's [International Development Research Centre](#) (IDRC), [Fonds de Recherche en QuÃ©bec](#) (FRQ), the [Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency](#) (Sida), United Kingdom's [Department for International Development](#) (DFID), the [United Kingdom Research and Innovation](#) (UKRI) through the [Newton Fund](#), and SGCI participating councils across 15 countries in sub-Saharan Africa are pleased to announce the COVID-19 Africa Rapid Grant Fund.

The Rapid Grant Fund seeks to contribute to the African regional and continental response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This call covers three strands: i) research, ii) science engagement: call to science and health journalists and communicators, and iii) science engagement: call to science advisers.

Researchers and science engagement practitioners from the following countries are eligible to apply: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and in the context of the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) Nigeria and South Africa.

[More information](#)

### AAS | Grand Challenges Africa | Deadline 30/06 2020

The African Academy of Sciences, has issued a call for proposals to support Transition to Scale for Innovations. This call is supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

### **MRC UK | Clinical Research Training Fellowship Pre-Doctoral | Deadline: 02/09 2020**

The fellowships support clinicians, including (but not limited to) medics, surgeons, dentists, clinical psychologists, public health specialty trainees, allied health professionals, nurses, midwives and veterinarians, to undertake a PhD or other higher research degree.

Applications are welcome across all areas of the MRC's remit to improve human health. Applications may range from basic studies with relevance to mechanisms of disease to translational and developmental clinical research, and may address research questions from disease-specific mechanistic hypotheses through to research in priority areas such as population health, public health and molecular pathology as outlined in MRC's strategic plan.

Applications addressing global health issues resulting in primary benefit to those living in low and middle income countries (LMIC), or those proposing interdisciplinary approaches are also welcomed.

[More information](#)

### **United Kingdom | Global Effort on COVID-19 Health Research | Deadline 28/09 2020**

The Global Effort on COVID-19 (GECO) Health Research is a new cross UK government funding call aiming to support applied health research that will address COVID-19 knowledge gaps. The focus is on understanding the pandemic and mitigating its health impacts in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC). The call prioritises are epidemiology, clinical management, infection control and health system responses.

The call is supported by: the UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) through the NIHR and the Medical Research Council (MRC), which is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). The funds form part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment. Support will be available to address the impacts of COVID-19 in LMICs for research which has a direct and primary focus on improving health in LMIC countries.

This call will be run as a series of calls - i.e. three consecutive rounds of the call will take place on a rolling basis.

[More information](#)

### **DAAD | one-year research grants | Deadline 31/10 2020**

The [German Academic Exchange Service \(DAAD\)](#) offers [one-year research grants to foreign doctoral candidates](#) and young academics and scientists with an opportunity to carry out research and continue their education in Germany. There are funding programmes for various qualification phases and stages in a career. The grants also promote the exchange of experience and networking amongst colleagues. The primary aim of this programme is to promote research projects within the context of doctoral programmes.

### **DAAD | Research Grants - Doctoral Progr. in Germany | Deadline 31/10 2020**

DAAD research grants provide young foreign academics and scientists with an opportunity to carry out research and continue their education in Germany. There are funding programmes for various qualification phases and stages in a career. The grants also promote the exchange of experience and networking amongst colleagues. [The aim of this grant programme is to support doctoral projects in Germany.](#)

### **DAAD | Research Stays in Germany | Deadline 31/10 2020**

DAAD grants provide foreign academics and scientists with an opportunity to carry out research and continue their education in Germany. There are funding programmes for various qualification phases and stages in a career. The aim of this particular programme is to support [short-term research stays](#) and thus promote the exchange of experience and networking amongst colleagues.

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*EDCTP Communications thanks the colleagues who provided information for this Update.*

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